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STATE FOR WHA/CAR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OTRA OVIP BB
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED TO REP. RANGEL FOR
TRAVEL TO BARBADOS

REF: STATE 90748

¶1. Embassy Bridgetown warmly welcomes and grants clearance to Congressman Rangel to travel to Barbados from July 1-4, 2007, for the purpose of attending the 28th meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM.

¶2. The control officer for Congressman Rangel's visit is Martina Strong. Mrs. Strong can be reached by telephone at (W) 246/227-4274, (C) 246/823-2813, (H) 246/420-3267, or by email at StrongMA@state.gov. DCM Gilroy can be reached at (W) 246/227-4218, (C) 246/823-2358, (H) 246/428-9176, or by email at GilroyME@state.gov. Congressman Rangel will be met upon arrival in Bridgetown by DCM Gilroy and Mrs. Strong. The Embassy emergency telephone number is 246/227-4066.

¶3. The CARICOM Secretariat has made hotel arrangements at the Hilton, tel: 246/426-0200, for Congressman Rangel.

¶4. The Barbados Ministry of Foreign Affairs protocol office will also assign a control officer and provide a Government of Barbados car and driver for the duration on the visit.

¶5. Entry/departure requirements: Mission policy is that all USG travelers to the region be in possession of a valid passport. Visas are not required for short visits. Visitors are granted up to 28 days upon entry, which can be extended through the Barbados Immigration Department for up to six months.

¶6. The exchange rate in Barbados is two Barbados dollars for one U.S. dollar. U.S. currency, traveler's checks, and credit cards are routinely and widely accepted.

¶7. The following is general information pertaining to security and health considerations throughout the Eastern Caribbean:

Security

We know of no specific threat related to the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting or to the Embassy's July 4th celebration.

In the Eastern Caribbean, foot travel outside of well-established tourist areas is not generally recommended, especially at night. Be vigilant when using public telephones or ATM machines near roadsides or quiet areas. As in many U.S. metropolitan areas, wearing expensive jewelry, carrying expensive objects, or carrying large amounts of cash should be avoided. Visitors should also safeguard valuables while at the beach. While hotels are generally safe, many visitors have experienced loss of unattended items. Hotel burglaries are not uncommon and all valuables should be locked in room safes if possible.

Health

Throughout the Eastern Caribbean, the most likely threat to a visitor's health is sunburn. It takes several weeks to become accustomed to the heat and humidity. Prolonged exposure to the sun, without protection, causes sunburn and may ultimately result in sun-damaged skin or even skin cancer. Sunscreens should be used for protection. In Barbados, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines the major health threat is dengue fever, transmitted by mosquito.

Dengue cases are most often seen in the summer months. Persons should therefore protect themselves with insect repellent. There is a growing number of HIV/AIDS cases reported. The Eastern Caribbean enjoys clean and safe drinking water. Only routine boosters for immunizations (i.e., tetanus, diphtheria, and oral polio vaccine) are required when traveling to this region. Barbados has the best medical facilities of all the islands in the region and most of the medical specialties have practitioners here.

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